

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Claims 22-42 remain pending in this application. Claims 1-21 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. New claims 22-42 have been added.

Priority

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's acknowledgment of the claim for priority. Submitted herewith is a certified copy of the corresponding Japanese patent application (JP 2001-126367, filed April 24, 2001). An indication that this document has been safely received would be appreciated.

35 U.S.C. §112

The rejection of claims 3, 4, 6-15, 18 and 19 under this section has been rendered moot by the cancellation of these claims without prejudice or disclaimer. It is submitted that the new claims satisfy the requirements under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103

Claims 17 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Takahashi et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,442,589). Claims 1, 3-5, 16, 19 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahashi et al in view of Shaffer et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,995,594). Claims 8 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahashi et al

in view of Shaffer et al as applied to claim 1 and further in view of the Official Notice. Claims 2 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahashi et al in view of Hidemasa (JP 07-183912). Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahashi et al in view of Shaffer et al as applied to claim 1 and further in view of Hidemasa. These rejections are traversed as follows.

According to one aspect of the present invention, an electronic mail management method includes the steps of receiving an electronic mail sent from a source terminal to a destination terminal through a first communication means. The electronic mail that is received is stored. The presence of an unopened electronic mail is posted to a communication terminal that is different from the source terminal through a second communication means that is different from the first communication means when an open notification of the stored mail is not received within a predetermined time. Therefore, a more reliable notification of the presence of an unopened electronic mail is provided even in the event there are problems with the Internet, etc.

None of the cited references disclose this feature of the present invention. For example, Takahashi et al disclose an electronic message forwarding system which selects a message to be forwarded using a plurality of program filters and routing the filtered message to an appropriate converter so as to convert it according to the receiving device, such as e-mail, pager, facsimile, etc. However, Takahashi et al do not disclose the claimed features of the present invention, particularly the

posting of the presence of an unopened electronic mail to a communication terminal that is different from the source terminal through a second communication means that is different from the first communication means as recited in the claims.

The deficiencies in Takahashi et al are not overcome Shaffer et al or Hidemasa. Shaffer et al disclose a voice mail system in which a telephone rings with a specific ring pattern in order to notify a user that the call relates to telephone messages in a mailbox. Hidemasa discloses the monitoring of received mails with respect to an unsealing time limit condition such that senders are informed of sealed mails matching the condition. Neither of these references disclose the posting of the presence of an unopened electronic mail to a communication terminal that is different from the source terminal through a communication means that is different from a first communication means by which the mail was initially sent if the mail is not opened within a predetermined period of time.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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